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By Suzanna Bowling

The Hamptons glittered a little brighter this weekend as Marilyn Maye, the indomitable legend of song, brought her extraordinary magic to LTV Studios in Wainscott as part of the Hamptons Summer Songbook by the Sea 2025 season. Produced by Donna Rubin and Josh Gladstone, this elegant series transforms a working television studio into an atmospheric cabaret, complete with candlelit café seating, a pristine Baby Grand, and acoustics that wrap around the room like silk.

Now in her mid-90s, Maye performed with the power and precision of someone a third her age — and with far more wit, wisdom, and charisma than most performers ever dream of. From the moment a nostalgic clip played of her iconic Tonight Show appearance singing “Cabaret” — her signature number, introduced to the world by none other than Johnny Carson, who invited her to his show a record 76 times — the audience was transported. And then she sang it live. With the same fire. The same sparkle. The same delicious phrasing that only Maye can conjure. Time did not pass — it bowed to her.

“Being Alive” from *Company* landed like a benediction — raw, resonant, and deeply earned. It was a standout moment in an evening full of standouts, made even more breathtaking by Tedd Firth, her longtime music director and a virtuoso of sensitivity and swing. He was joined by the always-exceptional Tom Hubbard on bass and Brian Carter on drums — a trio that moved as one, allowing Maye to stretch, riff, pause, and soar with unshakable confidence.

Her medleys — always a Maye hallmark — were pure jazz storytelling, blending classics with heart and humor. The rhythm was hers, the tempo was hers, the night was hers.

To top off the night New York State Representative Rebecca Seawright presented Ms. Maye with a proclamation. At tonight’s event, I had the distinct pleasure of meeting Lee Mindel, the visionary architect and design force behind Shelton Mindel, and the incredible Laurie Tisch, philanthropist and arts champion. A reminder that even in the glittering ease of a summer night, true legacy walks quietly — and inspires deeply. Look for Cabaret royalty and Broadway’s elite to entertain such as Lee Roy Reams, Liz Callaway, Eric Comstock and Barbara Fasano, KT Sullivan and Mark Nadler, and the internationally acclaimed Moipei sisters come to this venue. The applause wasn’t just enthusiastic — it was reverent. They knew they were witnessing greatness.

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